

Preliminary Amendment  
Serial No. 09/674,643  
Our Ref: Q61622

first resilient return hinge means for connecting the first end of the first link to the sleeve,  
said first hinge means being organized so that said first link takes up a defined equilibrium  
position on a direction that makes an acute angle ( $\alpha$ ) with the axis of the through bore;

base means suitable for receiving the base end of the needle to be protected;

a first crank arm, said first crank arm being defined between first and second ends, said  
crank arm being of a length " $I_1$ " defined between its two ends, the length " $I_1$ " of the first crank  
arm being no greater than the length " $L_1$ " of the first link; and

first means for mounting each of said first and second ends of the first crank arm to pivot  
freely respectively on the second end of the first link and on the base means.

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